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What Commercial Union will do for the Farmer in Ontario.

IT is time that the Farmer should begin to look to his own interest. It is time that he should claim a voice in the Commercial legislation of the country. Hitherto, the head of the Government has been closeted before an election only with the manufacturer, though the farming interest is by far the most important and pays the bulk of the taxes. The outlook for the farmer in Ontario is not good. Wheat-growing in this Province will never again be what it has been. The English market is being more and more supplied with Indian and Russian wheat. In India, the extent of wheat land seems to be almost unlimited, and, as the Hindoo needs only a little rice for food and hardly any clothes or fuel, he can send almost all he raises to market; he only wants railways and better implements, both of which the government is giving him. Then there is likely to be vast competition from the North-West. While the manufacturer is protected against competition by taxes laid on the farmer, the farmer is taxed to bring down competition on himself by building the Canadian Pacific Railway to open the North-West. England as a cattle market for Canada has failed; it is too far off. Still less is the distant market likely to be good for horses, as the horse may have to stand long at livery before he is bought. England, now that wheat-growing no longer pays there, will probably turn more to raising her own meat and dairy produce. The value of farm property in Ontario has gone down greatly; in large districts

it has gone down thirty per cent. The best of our young farmers are leaving the country by hundreds.

The N. P. was to give the farmer a home market. It has given him nothing but dearer clothes and "combines." What is the N. P. but a set of additions to the taxes? Can a country make itself rich by taxation? The government seems to think so, for it goes on piling up debt and taxes. A country trying to improve its condition by taxing itself is like a man "trying to lift himself by his own boot-straps."

The only way of really improving the condition of the farmer is to give him a better market. The best market in the world is that of the United States. The people of the United States are now the richest in the world, and the readiest to pay for anything which they need or fancy. Their numbers and wealth are always increasing. This market, which is close at hand, not on the other side of the Atlantic, is the natural market of the Canadian farmer. But he is shut out of it by a tariff wall. That tariff wall Commercial Union, or call it if you like Unrestricted Reciprocity, proposes to throw down, giving the farmer of Ontario a fair market to sell in, and at the same time a fair market to buy in, so that he may get the full earnings of his labour and spend them to the best advantage.

Trade is trying all the time to climb over the tariff wall. Out of our \$81,000,000 worth of exports we already sell to the Americans more than \$36,000,000. Out of \$105,000,000 of imports we already buy of the Americans \$45,000,000. These figures would double or treble if the tariff wall were out of the way.

Out of 18,779 horses that we sold, the United States bought 18,225. Out of 443,000 sheep, the United States bought 363,000. Of 116,000 cattle, the United States bought 45,000. Of about two millions worth of eggs they bought all. Of 1,416,000 pounds of wool they bought 1,300,000 pounds.

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Of 9,456,000 bushels of barley they bought all. . Of \$743,000 of hay they bought \$670,000. Of \$439,000 worth of potatoes they bought \$338,000. Of \$83,000 worth of general vegetables, they bought \$75,000 worth.

Wherever an opening is made in the tariff wall, trade at once rushes through. When the duty was taken off eggs, the trade rose from a nominal amount to nearly two millions. Where is the use of telling us then that the Americans would not trade with us or that we should not profit by the trade? The United States import over SIXTY MILLION dollars worth of foreign products with all of which Canada could supply them. The horse trade with the United States especially, is likely to develop greatly if the trade is set free. Instead of the horses having to stand at livery, as they do when sent to England, the American purchaser takes them up on the spot. The Americans use horses more and are willing to give higher prices for them than the English.

Commercial Union would give at the same time a free and good market for all our products, for our minerals, in which we are incredibly rich, but which now are not worked because they cannot be sold, and for our lumber and our fish. All our industries would be developed, the number of our people and their power of buying would be increased, and the farmer would then be provided with the best of home markets without having to pay taxes or bonuses for creating it. It has been said by some who had studied the subject that if our mining industry had free trade and fair play, our farmers would have employment enough in feeding our miners.

Under the Reciprocity Treaty the Canadian farmer prospered. The Government has repeatedly tried to make another treaty, showing that it recognizes the benefit of Reciprocity. This is the answer to all the partisans of the government who now argue that by Reciprocity the farmer would

gain nothing. The N. P. Tariff Act contains a standing offer of reciprocity in natural products. But this is a mockery, as the Americans will not admit our natural products unless we will admit their manufactures.

The English market, whatever it may be worth, will not be closed when the American market is opened. It will remain just as open as it is now, and we shall have the advantage of both.

As to the Annexation Bogey, see *Grip's* woodcut below. Reciprocity did not annex us, or show any tendency to annex us, when we had it before. Why should it annex us now?

On one side is the party Shibboleth: on the other is the farmer's bread, and that of his wife and children. Will he choose the Shibboleth or the bread?



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